United Nations ST/AI/2016/5

Secretariat

1 July 2016

Administrative instruction

Settling-in grant

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, pursuant to section 4.2 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2009/4 and for the purpose of implementing the new relocation package, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/244, and the provisions of staff rule 7.14, hereby promulgates the following:

Section 1
General provisions

Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the settling-in grant (the "grant") is to provide eligible staff members with a reasonable cash amount for relocation on initial appointment, assignment or transfer to a duty station. It is the total compensation payable by the Organization for costs incurred by the eligible staff member and his or her family members as a result of an appointment, assignment or transfer involving relocation, as well as any pre-departure expenses that the staff member may incur as a result.

Elements

1.2 The grant consists of:

(a) A daily subsistence allowance (DSA) portion, payable in accordance with the provisions and criteria detailed in section 2; and

(b) A lump-sum portion, payable in accordance with the provisions and criteria detailed in section 3.

Eligibility

1.3 Staff members who are internationally recruited under staff rule 4.5 and who hold an appointment other than a temporary appointment shall be eligible for payment of the settling-in grant, provided they meet the requirements set out in the present instruction.

1.4 Staff members who are internationally recruited pursuant to staff rule 4.5 and who hold a temporary appointment shall be eligible for payment of the DSA portion of the grant for themselves only, subject to meeting the requirements set out in the

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present instruction. The staff members shall not be eligible for payment of the lump-sum portion of the grant or the DSA portion in respect of their family members.

1.5 An eligible staff member shall be entitled to payment of the grant when he or she has been authorized to proceed on travel involving relocation on initial appointment, assignment or transfer, and when the period of service at the new duty station is expected to be for at least one year.

1.6 The grant shall not be paid to a staff member recruited from the area within commuting distance of the duty station, unless he or she demonstrates that it was necessary to change accommodation as a direct consequence of the appointment with the Secretariat, for instance after moving out of a house formerly provided free of charge by his or her previous employer. Other accommodation changes within the area of commuting distance, and promotion or recruitment to the Professional category of a staff member previously serving in another category at the same duty station, shall not give rise to payment of the grant.

1.7 Pursuant to section 1.6 above, a staff member shall be eligible for payment of the grant when he or she has been authorized to proceed on travel involving relocation from beyond commuting distance and necessitating a change of accommodation, when the travel is within the same country.

1.8 When the assignment to a new duty station is for less than one year and the Secretary-General, under staff rule 3.7 (c) (ii), has decided to apply the post adjustment applicable to the duty station and related entitlements such as the settling-in grant, the grant shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of section 6.2.

Section 2
DSA portion

2.1 The DSA portion of the grant shall normally consist of subsistence allowance for 30 days:

(a) At the daily rate applicable at the duty station in respect of the staff member; and

(b) At half such daily rate in respect of each eligible family member for whom the staff member had an entitlement to travel expenses to the duty station at the time of initial appointment, assignment or transfer to the duty station, and for whom such travel expenses have been paid by the Organization. A child born or adopted or a spouse recognized after the time of initial appointment shall not give rise to payment of DSA, regardless of whether the Organization provides travel to the duty station.

2.2 The rates mentioned in section 2.1 shall be the ones in effect in the duty station on the date of arrival at the duty station of the staff member and the staff member's eligible family member, as appropriate.

2.3 At duty stations other than those classified in the H category, the normal 30-day period may be extended up to a maximum of 90 days, in accordance with staff rule 7.14 (c) (ii). The extension of the DSA payment may be granted in the event that a staff member is obliged to make continued use of hotel accommodation for more than 30 days owing to the lack of reasonable apartments or houses at the duty station. The amount of the grant during the extended period shall be up to 60 per cent of the prevailing DSA rate on the date of arrival at the duty station.

2.4 Only the DSA portion of the grant shall be payable to locally recruited staff members who, after temporarily being converted to the Field Service category, have been absent from their parent duty station for at least one year and return to the duty station to assume their duties.

DSA portion in respect of eligible family members

2.5 Entitlement to the DSA portion of the grant in respect of any eligible family member shall arise when the following conditions are met:

(a) The family member travels at United Nations expense, in compliance with the rules governing official travel of family members; and

(b) The family member arrives at the duty station at least six months prior to the date on which the staff member's service at the duty station is expected to end. This requirement may be waived in respect of dependent children attending an educational institution outside the duty station.

Computation and currency of payment

2.6 The DSA portion of the grant at each duty station shall be paid in accordance with the provisions of the administrative instruction on the system of daily subsistence allowance,[1] subject to the following adjustments:

(a) When a special DSA rate has been established for specified hotel(s) at a particular location, the special rate shall be payable only upon provision of a certification from the senior administrative officer concerned that the staff member or an eligible family member had no alternative but to stay for a number of days at that specified hotel, and upon presentation of hotel receipts. The remainder of the DSA portion of the grant shall be calculated on the basis of the regular DSA rate for the duty station;

(b) When the normal 30-day period has been exceptionally extended in accordance with section 2.3, the DSA portion of the grant for the period of the extension may not exceed 60 per cent of the applicable DSA rate.

2.7 The DSA portion of the grant shall normally be paid in United States dollars, subject to the rules governing currency of payment of salaries and allowances.[2]

Section 3
Lump-sum portion

3.1 In addition to any amount of grant paid under section 2 above, a staff member who is appointed or assigned to a duty station for one year or longer shall receive a lump-sum payment of one month's net base salary and, where appropriate, post adjustment at the duty station of assignment, as defined in sections 3.3 and 3.4.

3.2 The lump-sum portion of the grant shall not be payable to locally recruited staff members who return to their parent duty station after an assignment during which they were temporarily converted to the Field Service category.

[1] ST/AI/2014/2, entitled "System of daily subsistence allowance", or as amended.
[2] ST/AI/2001/1, entitled "Currency and modalities of payment of salaries and allowances", or as amended.

Computation

3.3 For staff in the Professional and higher categories and the Field Service category, the emoluments used for computation of the lump-sum portion of the grant shall consist of the staff member's net base salary and post adjustment at the duty station of appointment or assignment, at his or her grade and step on the date of appointment or reassignment.

3.4 For internationally recruited General Service staff, the emoluments used for computation of the lump-sum portion of the grant shall consist of the net base salary at the grade and step of the staff member on the date of appointment or assignment, plus language allowance, if any.

Currency of payment

3.5 The lump-sum portion of the grant shall normally be paid in United States dollars, subject to the rules governing currency of payment of salaries and allowances.[2]

Section 4
Special conditions applicable when both spouses are staff members

4.1 When a staff member is married to another staff member or to a staff member of another organization of the United Nations common system and each spouse travels on appointment, transfer or assignment at the expense of the Organization to the same duty station:

(a) Each staff member shall receive the DSA portion of the grant for himself or herself, computed in accordance with section 2;

(b) The DSA portion in respect of dependent children travelling to the duty station shall be paid to the staff member on whom they are recognized as being dependent;

(c) Only one lump sum shall be paid, normally to the spouse employed at a higher grade and on the basis of his or her emoluments.

4.2 When both spouses travel on appointment, transfer or assignment at the expense of the Organization to different duty stations:

(a) Each staff member shall receive the DSA portion of the grant for himself or herself, computed in accordance with section 2;

(b) The DSA portion in respect of dependent children travelling to one of the duty stations where their parents are assigned shall normally be paid to the parent on whom they are recognized as being dependent, unless the child accompanies the other parent and both staff members request that the DSA portion be paid to that other parent;

(c) Each staff member shall receive the lump-sum portion applicable to his or her situation, in accordance with section 3.

Section 5
Timing of payment of the grant

5.1 The DSA portion of the grant in respect of the staff member and the lump-sum portion are normally payable on the actual date of arrival at the duty station, or on the date of recruitment to an appointment giving rise to payment of the grant.

5.2 The DSA portion of the grant in respect of eligible family members is payable on the actual date of arrival of each family member at the duty station and not earlier than the arrival date of the staff member at the duty station.

Advance against lump-sum portion

5.3 An advance of 80 per cent of the lump-sum portion of the grant, as computed at the time the advance payment is made, may be paid up to three months in advance of travel of a staff member assigned or transferred to a new duty station.

5.4 No advance against the lump-sum portion may be made in the case of initial appointments.

5.5 When an advance is paid, the releasing office shall so notify the receiving office, which shall make the necessary adjustments upon the staff member's arrival at the new duty station.

Section 6
Adjustment/recovery

Return to the same duty station

6.1 When a change of official duty station or a new appointment involves a return to a place at which the internationally recruited staff member was previously stationed, and where a settling-in grant had been paid, the full amount of the grant (composed of both the DSA and lump-sum portions, where applicable) shall be paid only when the staff member has been absent from that place for at least one year. In the case of a shorter absence, the amount payable shall normally be that proportion of the full amount of the grant (i.e. DSA and lump sum) that the completed months of absence bear to 12 months.

Assignment of less than one year

6.2 When the assignment to a new duty station is for less than one year and the Secretary-General has decided to pay post adjustment and related entitlements, including settling-in grant, as provided in section 1.8, and pursuant to staff rule 3.7 (c) (ii):

(a) The DSA portion of the grant shall be paid in full;

(b) The lump-sum portion, where payable in accordance with section 3, shall be prorated in the proportion that the number of months of appointment bears to 12 months.

Should the appointment or assignment be subsequently extended to one year or longer at the same duty station, the staff member shall receive the balance of the lump-sum portion which would have been paid had the initial appointment been for one year or longer.

6.3 Pursuant to staff rule 7.10, staff members shall receive an appropriate daily subsistence allowance for periods of duty away from their official duty station, provided that such period does not exceed the maximum duration under staff rule 4.8. Any extension of such assignment, in accordance with staff rule 4.8, shall result in a change of duty station and payment of the post adjustment and related entitlements, notwithstanding staff rule 3.7 (c). The change in duty station may also result in the payment of a settling-in grant (both DSA and lump-sum portions, where applicable), provided the following conditions are met:

(a) The total expected period of service at the duty station, including the period during which the staff received the subsistence allowance, is at least 12 months;

(b) The extension occurs at least six months prior to the expected end of the appointment or assignment at the duty station.

However, when subsistence allowance has been paid for a period not exceeding the maximum duration under staff rule 4.8, and the assignment is extended to reach a total period of less than 12 months, including the period during which the staff received the subsistence allowance, the staff member is not entitled to the DSA portion of the grant. Only the lump-sum portion of the grant shall be paid in accordance with sections 3 and 6.2 (b).

Reduction in period of service at the duty station

6.4 In cases where the staff member has not completed the period of service, except for reasons as noted in section 6.5, in respect of which the settling-in grant has been paid, the grant shall be adjusted proportionately and recovery made as follows:

(a) The DSA portion of the grant paid on arrival at the duty station shall normally not be recoverable; and

(b) The lump-sum portion of the grant shall be prorated and recovered or adjusted in the proportion that the period of service at the duty station bears to one year.

6.5 The Secretary-General may grant an exception to the provisions of section 6.4 for compelling and/or compassionate reasons (e.g. health, reduction of the duration of an appointment or assignment at the direction of the Organization, i.e. due to closure or restructuring of a department/office, or for other reasons beyond the control of the staff member). In such instances there shall be no prorating of any portion of the grant.

Section 7
Transitional measures

7.1 For staff members who were paid an assignment grant on or prior to 30 June 2016, the following provisions will apply to the lump-sum portion of the assignment grant.

7.2 A staff member who is appointed or reassigned for one year or longer to a category A to E duty station, and does not have a removal entitlement, shall receive a lump-sum payment equivalent to:

(a) One month's net salary and, where appropriate, post adjustment at the duty station of assignment if the duration of the assignment is expected to be of one year or longer but less than three years; or

(b) Two months' net salary and, where appropriate, post adjustment at the duty station of assignment if the assignment is expected to be for three years or longer.

7.3 The lump-sum portion of the grant shall be adjusted or recovered when the staff member has not completed the period of service in respect of which the lump-sum portion of the assignment grant has been paid. When a two-month lump sum has been paid and the completed period of service at the duty station is less than three years, the lump sum shall be adjusted/recovered as follows:

(a) If the completed period of service at the duty station is less than one year, the first month's lump sum shall be prorated and recovered/adjusted in the proportion that the period of service bears to the first year (12 months) of assignment. The second month's lump sum shall be recovered in full;

(b) If the completed period of service at the duty station is one year or more but less than two years, there shall be no recovery in respect of the first month's lump sum, but the second month's lump sum shall be recovered in full;

(c) If the completed period of service at the duty station is more than two years but less than three years, there shall be no recovery in respect of the first month's lump sum, but the second month's lump sum shall be prorated and recovered/adjusted in the proportion that the completed period of service in the third year of assignment (i.e., the period exceeding 24 months) bears to the third year (12 months) of assignment.

If the completed period of service at the duty station is three years or more, the lump sum shall not be recovered/adjusted.

7.4 These transitional measures are applicable only to any appointment, assignment or transfer with an effective date on or prior to 30 June 2016. The transitional measures shall cease to be in effect from 30 June 2019.

Section 8
Final provisions

8.1 The present instruction shall enter into force on 1 July 2016.

8.2 Administrative instruction ST/AI/2012/1, entitled "Assignment grant", is hereby abolished.

(*Signed*) Yukio **Takasu**
Under-Secretary-General for Management